

ON THE GENERATION AND CORRUPTION OF THE CATEGORIES

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IT is tempting to assume that an obvious way in which Aristotle determined his list of categories was to take a primary substance as subject and classify its predicates.¹ The advantage of this suggestion is that it appears to give us the list of categories given at *Categories* 1^b25 ff. For example, if we take Socrates as subject, then, when we predicate *man* of him, we get a predicate which is a substance (*ousia*). When we consider "Socrates is grammatical" we get a predicate in quality or "how qualified" (*poion*). "Socrates is in the market place" gives us place or "where" (*pou*) and so on.

Although I shall propose that, in the case of the first category, *ousia*, this is not how Aristotle, in fact, proceeds in the *Categories* (see p. 674 below), the major shortcoming of this procedure is that it cannot account for individuals, and *a fortiori* individual substances, as items in the categories.² To include these, one starts with all sorts of entities and classifies them as to their basic ontological type, subsuming individuals under species and advancing through intermediate genera until an ultimate genus, or category, is reached. For example: Socrates, man, animal, animate being, corporeal being, *substance*; Socrates' color, white, color, sense quality, *quality*—and so on for the ten categories.³ Since, in this case, we are concerned with things considered with regard to their fundamental ontological status, let me call this the O list of categories and this approach or method the O approach. The first category in this list will be *ousia* or substance. Because it alone includes individuals, this list is a neces-

¹ See J. Ackrill, *Aristotle's Categories and De Interpretatione* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1963), pp. 78–79, for this alternative.

² I shall try to avoid consideration of the status of individuals in non-substance categories. For the discussion of the nature of such entities see: Ackrill, pp. 74–75, 83; G. E. L. Owen, "Inherence," *Phronesis* 10 (1965): 97–105; J. Moravcsik, "Aristotle on Predication," *Philosophical Review* (1967): 80–96; R. E. Allen, "Individual Properties in Aristotle's Categories," *Phronesis* 14 (1969): 31–39; Matthews & Cohen, "The One and the Many," *Review of Metaphysics* (1968): 630–55.

³ See Ackrill, p. 79, for this alternative.

sary complement to any account of Aristotle's method which takes him as arriving at the categories by considering the relations of predicates to their subjects. Let me refer to this latter way as the PR (predicate relative) approach and the corresponding list of categories as the PR list. The possibility, raised at the very start of the paper, which took the subject of the various predicates to be a substance, may be designated as the *subject restricted to substance* PR case or SRPR. I will return to this alternative and, in disagreement with the majority of commentators, will maintain that, with one possible exception, it is not a likely model for generating any occurrence of the categories in Aristotle.

My procedure, therefore, will not be to start with the SRPR option and try to adjust it to harmonize with the doctrine of the work entitled *Categories*, nor indeed to take this work as my point of departure, for, somewhat paradoxically, I shall contend that the list of *Categories* 1^b25 ff. was assembled in a rather haphazard fashion. I shall, in fact, begin with *Topics* 1.9 and, taking this as basic, endeavor to explain the other relevant passages in the Aristotelian corpus in the light of what is to be found there.

In *Topics* 1.9 (103^b20–104^a2) Aristotle undertakes to determine the categories (*ta genē tōn katēgoriōn*) in which the four “predicables”—genus, definition, property, and accident—are found. These are said to be ten in number: *ti esti*, *poson*, *poion*, *pros ti*, *pou*, *pote*, *keisthai*, *echein*, *poiein*, and *paschein*, for every proposition (*pro-tasis*), by attaching a genus, definition, property, or accident to a subject, expresses either what it is (*ti esti*) or its quantity (*poson*) or quality (*poion*), etc. This is to say, presumably, that when the predicable is a genus or definition the proposition says what a thing is (*ti esti*) and, when a property or accident is predicated, we are told its quantity or quality or one of the other categories (103^b35–39).

Aristotle then proceeds, at 103^b27–29, to explain that a person saying what a thing is (*to ti esti sēmainōn*) sometimes indicates a substance (*hote men ousian sēmainei*), sometimes a quantity, sometimes a quality, and sometimes one of the other categories. For example, given a man, when one says it is a man or an animal he says *what it is*, commonly translated as “states an essence,”⁴ and indicates a sub-

⁴ I shall translate *ti esti* in this context as “essence” although a stricter expression for essence is *to ti ēn einai* which always includes both the genus and differentia. One may answer the question *ti esti* by giving either the

stance (*ti esti legei kai ousian sēmainei*). When he says of a white color that it is a color he states an essence and indicates a quality (*ti esti legei kai poion sēmainei*) and of a cubit that it is a magnitude he states an essence and indicates a quantity (*ti esti legei kai poson sēmainei*).

Let us focus our attention on three instances of the expression *ti esti*. In line 22 it is the first in a list of ten categories. In line 26 it has the same function but only two other categories are explicitly given. In line 27, however, it is not given in a list of categories, but is said to range over such a list, for it can signify any of *ousia*, *poson*, *poion*, etc. There is no reason to diverge from the usual practice of taking *ousia* here to mean “substance” and not “essence in general.”⁵ This is to understand *ousia* as applying to such items as Socrates, man, animal, Bucephalus, horse, etc., in other words, those entities described as primary and secondary substances in the *Categories*, and is to exclude such things as color, magnitude, etc. Now this *ousia* cannot be equivalent to the *ti esti* in line 27 as the latter has a much wider extension in that it applies to all categories and not only to substances. It has been a commonplace, however, to assume that the *ti esti* in line 22 (repeated in 26) is replacing *ousia* in the sense of substance and, as a result, Aristotle has been judged to have used the term *ti esti* in an equivocal fashion.⁶

definition (e.g., *An Post.* 97^a24) or the genus alone (*Top.* 144^a17). There is some doubt as to whether the differentia is predicated in *ti esti*. *Topics* 153^a18 says “yes,” *Topics* 122^b16, “no.” See W. D. Ross, *Aristotle's Metaphysics* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1924) 1: 343 (n. to 1024^b4) and 2: 171 (n. to 1030^a29).

⁵ It is sufficient for our purposes to distinguish two main senses of *ousia*: (1) as *substance*—this includes (a) primary substance, the ultimate subject or *hupokeimenon* (in the sense of compound) exemplified by such entities as Socrates and Bucephalus which are capable of independent existence and have ontological priority over the other entities which are either said of such a subject or present in it. (b) genera and species of primary substances—called secondary substances in the *Categories*. (2) as *essence*—found in the expression *logos tēs ousias*, exemplified by such items as *man* (with respect to Socrates) and *color* (with respect to white). It is not limited to the essences of substances.

⁶ See T. Waitz, *Aristotelis Organon Graece* (Leipzig: Hahn, 1846) 2: p. 79; H. Steinthal, *Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft bei den Griechen und Römern* (Berlin: F. Duemmler, 1890), pp. 221–22; Ackrill, pp. 79–80; S. Mansion, “Notes sur la doctrine des catégories dans les *Topiques*” in *Aristotle on Dialectic*, ed. G. E. L. Owen (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 198; V. Sainati, *Storia dell' Organon Aristotelico* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1968) 1: 138–39. This unfortunate tendency is by no means new. Alex-

It is not difficult to see why scholars have interpreted *ti esti* at line 22 as substance. It is the first of the categories listed and it is assumed, not unreasonably, that the first category is substance. Also, as we shall see, *ti esti* is given (e.g., *Metaphysics* 1028^a11) as the first member of a list of categories when this first category clearly is substance.

I shall follow a different strategy and see what can be made of the passage on the assumption that Aristotle is *not* using *ti esti* equivocally, that it does *not* mean “substance” at lines 22 and 26, and that, when he does get the category of substance (line 28), he designates it, as we would expect, by the term *ousia*.

As mentioned before, *ti esti* at line 27 is said to signify sometimes *ousia*, sometimes *poson*, etc. . . . It is generally agreed, and rightly so, that this list at line 28 of *ousia*, *poson*, *poion*, is to be interpreted in the standard fashion as substance, quantity, quality. . . . These are the irreducibly ultimate kinds of things we find there are if we take the various items or entities which exist, substances and so-called “things in a subject” (*Categories* 1^a20 ff.), and ask of each “What is it?” (*ti esti*;). The examples of *Topics* 103^b29 ff. give the following familiar progressions: (1) a particular man (say Socrates) → man → animal → substance, (2) a given white color → color → quality, (3) a cubit length → magnitude → quantity. We have here what I have labelled the O list of categories.

Keeping this O list in mind let us look again at the beginning of *Topics* 1.9 where, at line 103^b22, we find the list of ten categories whose first member is *ti esti*, commonly taken as a substitute for *ousia*. Aristotle, as we saw, has committed himself in *Topics* 1.4 to the assertion that any (dialectical) proposition is formed by attaching to a subject either its definition, genus, property, or accident, these four predicables being the basic materials from which arguments (*logoi*) start. Now at 103^b20 ff., as noted above, he maintains that when we assert any of these of a subject we say either what it is, by

ander, *In Aristotelis Topicorum libros octo commentaria*, ed. Wallies (*Commentaria in Aristotelem graeca* 2.2), (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1891), p. 65, ll. 17–19, interprets *ti esti* at l. 22, taken *kuriōs*, to be equivalent to *ousia*, as also, p. 66, the *ti esti* at l. 26. He remarks that *ti esti* is a *pollachōs legomenon* without explicit discussion as to how it must be taken to make sense of its occurrence in l. 27. Brunschwig, in his edition of the *Topics* for the Budé series (Paris: Société d’Édition “Les Belles Lettres,” 1967) notes in his critical apparatus (p. 13) with reference to 103^b22, “supra *ti esti* add. ἥτοι οὐσία AV^{Pcu}.²”

giving its entire essence (definition) or a part thereof (genus), or we state its quality, quantity, etc. (property and accident). This produces the list of categories found at 103^b22 where *ti esti*, fully in harmony with its use at lines 26 and 27, must mean “essence” and, since the subjects in question are by no means limited to substances, it cannot, as most commentators suggest, be replaced by *ousia*, or “substance,” for it contains the essences of nonsubstances. This list is based on the relation of predicates to a subject and is an instance of what I have called the PR list of categories.

Let me present the two basic lists for comparison:

<i>O LIST</i>	<i>PR LIST</i>
substance (<i>ousia</i>)—Socrates, man, animal	essence (<i>ti esti</i>)—“man,” “color,” “magnitude”
quantity (<i>poson</i>)—Socrates’ height, cubit length, length, magnitude	quantity or “how quantified” (<i>poson</i>)—“one cubit long”
quality (<i>poion</i>)—Socrates’ color, white color, color, justice, virtue	quality or “how qualified” (<i>poion</i>)—“white,” “colored,” “just”

Let us look for a moment at the categories other than the first—the non-substance categories of the O list and the non-essence categories of the PR list. Individuals in non-substance categories will be found only in the O list. What of non-individuals in non-substance and non-essence categories? From what I have outlined so far it would appear that the PR list ranges only over predicates considered as linguistic items in sentences, i.e., what we have in *poion* is the word “colored,” not the thing *color* and likewise for the other categories. Hence color, always in quality in the O list, would, in the PR, be represented by “color” in the category of essence, or *ti esti*, when it is the genus of white, as expressed by the sentence “white is (a) color,” and by the word “colored” in the category of quality when it is an accident of Socrates, a state of affairs expressed by saying “Socrates is colored.”

But Aristotle is notorious for not deeming it necessary to distinguish the sign and the thing signified in many contexts where such a distinction would appear natural for us and he treats the four predicables, definition, property, genus, and accident, which fall into the PR categories, as a mixture of linguistic and non-linguistic items. Definition is obviously a linguistic entity. Accident, however, appears to

O LIST

PR LIST

⁷ Some examples of property are not grammatical predicates. Being capable of learning grammar (*to grammatikēs einai dektikon* 102^a20) is a property of man which, presumably, is indicated by the expression “capable of learning grammar” in the sentence “Man is capable of learning grammar.” The property itself is not contained in the sentence whereby it is indicated. Note, on the other hand, that at e.g., 101^b20 Aristotle uses the term “property” where he is speaking of a property-expression, i.e., a linguistic item coordinate with definition.

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quantity or “how quantified” (*poson*)—“one cubit long” or cubit length
 quality or “how qualified” (*poion*)—“white,” “colored,” “just” or white color, color, justice

It is to our advantage to concentrate on the differences between the lists revealed by the first category of each because if, in the other categories, we ignore the problematic non-substance individuals of the O list and the paronymous grammatical predicates of the PR list, the non-substance and non-essence items will be the same. This should not surprise us since justice, for example, ontologically speaking, is a quality, but qualities are qualities of substances, or other subjects, and this dependent being causes them to be presented as non-essential predicates or attributes of their subject.

Consider then the first category of each list. For present purposes I shall focus on the essences proper and disregard the essence-expressions such as “man,” “color,” and so on. Notice that each list has items (those italicized) in its first category which are not in the corresponding division of the other list. These are the non-substance essences of the PR list and the individual substances of the O list. We have, therefore a clear division between two distinct lists of categories which are arrived at by different methods. If there are individuals in the first category it is an O list category. If there are non-substance essences in the first category it is a PR list category. (If the only essences in the first category are those of substances, that is not enough, in itself, to distinguish an O list from the SRPR described above and to be discussed at some length later on.)

In contrast, then, with the majority of commentators, who come to *Topics* 1.9 with a conceptual schema for the categories based on other works of Aristotle and, as a result, have to explain away that passage as aberrant and confused, I shall reverse this procedure and start from the assumption that the *Topics* section is clear and consistent (in that whenever *ti esti* is used within it means essence and not substance). My course of action therefore will be to see how far the O and PR lists of categories found therein will go in accounting for the various other places in the corpus where the categories play a role and to try to explain away such anomalies as may arise. To this task I now turn.

Several well-known passages in Aristotle fit easily into the O-PR dichotomy. Examples of O lists are found in the *De Anima* at 402^a24

and 410^a14. At 402^a24 the first category is *tode ti kai ousia*. Since Aristotle is here classifying a particular sort of entity, the soul, as to its ultimate kind, and hence is taking it in itself and not as a type of predicate, we have the O list of categories and *ousia* must be understood as *substance*.⁹ Furthermore, the presence of the expression *tode ti* is a good sign that we have an O list for it connotes individuality and individuals obtain only in the O list.¹⁰

In the *Metaphysics* straightforward instances of the O list are found at 1045^b29 and 1069^a21 where the first category is *ousia*, clearly to be read as *substance*.¹¹

A number of passages are readily seen to be cases of the PR list. At *An. Post.* 83^a21, after distinguishing genuine (or “simple”) from accidental predications, Aristotle says of genuine predications that when one thing is predicated of another it is either in *ti esti* or it is *poion*, *poson*, *pros ti*, etc. Then at 83^a24 Aristotle separates those genuine predications where the predicate indicates the essence from those where it does not. At this point *ousia* is substituted for *ti esti*, but *ousia* is to be understood as *essence*, not *substance*.¹² So we still have a PR list when *ousia*, in its sense of essence, is used as equivalent to *ti esti* where *ti esti* means “essence in general” and is not limited to substances.

⁹ The mere presence of the word *ousia* does not ensure the translation “substance,” for at 402^a7, *ousia* is to be read as essence and at 402^a13–14 *ousia* and *ti esti* are used synonymously to mean “essence.” So within ten lines we have a choice example of *ousia*’s homonymy. At 410^a14–15 we have only *tode ti* given for the first category, but at 410^a17, 20, 21 we have *ousia* replacing *tode ti* so there is no difference to be found between this list and that at 402^a24.

¹⁰ *Tode ti* indicates either (1) an individual substance, e.g., *Cat.* 3^b10 ff., *Meta.* 1003^a9–12, 1028^a15, or (2) the determinate form by which an individual substance is the sort of thing it is, e.g., *Meta.* 1042^a29. At *Meta.* 1003^a9–12 Aristotle asserts that no common predicate signifies *tode ti* but *toionde* (cf. 1039^a1).

¹¹ At *Meta.* 1069^b9, as in the related passage 1068^a8, we are to understand the first item in the list of categories as *substance*. The Greek *tí* is replaced at ^b11 by *tode*. This “*ti*” does not have to be taken as short for *tí esti*, but stands for *tode ti* (cf. *ti* at *Meta.* 1029^a20, 1045^b33, *De Gen. et Corr.* 318^a15 where there is no question but that we have the O list). On p. 124 of the Loeb edition the editor changes the accent of the *tí* at 1069^b9 from acute to grave, but we can treat the accentuation, for our purposes, as an anachronistic inconvenience. One might wonder, however, why Ross and Jaeger change *tí* to *ti* at 1045^b33 and do not do so here.

¹² See 83^a39 where *ousia* is defined as the genus or the differentia of the subject of which it is predicated. As stated in n. 5 above, *ousia* can mean either substance or essence. Although it had both senses in the

Let me now turn to the *Metaphysics*. In Beta, at 996^b17–18, we find it stated that he knows something most of all who knows *ti esti* rather than *poson*, *poion*. . . . Here *ti esti* is *essence* and is not limited to substance. The example given is the “essence” of the squaring of a rectangle. *Ousia* is taken in this context (996^b14) to be essence. This is clearly a PR list.

In Delta at 1017^a7–30 we have *per se* (*kath' hautō*) being contrasted with that which is accidental (*kata sumbebēkos*). Aristotle remarks at 1017^a22 that there are as many kinds of *per se* being as there are categories. There follows a list of eight categories, headed by *ti esti*, and described as *katēgoroumena* or predicates. As in *Topics* 1.9 he is considering the types of things predicates can say of subjects. A predicate can give the essence of a subject (*ti esti*) or a quality, quantity, etc. This is the PR list with the first category (essence) not limited to substances. But, if this reading is correct, *per se* being cannot be coordinate with essential predication for *ti esti* is only one class of *per se* being. “Man walks” expresses a case of *per se* being under the category of *action*.

Help in clarifying this point may be found at *An. Post.* 83^a1 ff. where Aristotle distinguishes predication proper from accidental predication. In the latter case the grammatical subject is not a *hupo-keimenon*. For example, in “the white (thing) is wood” “the white” is not a substrate for wood, but vice versa, and therefore “wood” is not really predicated of “the white.” In “the musical is white” the real subject is (a) man who happens to be musical and white. Hence we do not have a genuine predication here either. But in “the wood is white” the wood is the substrate and whiteness is attributed to it. For this reason this predication is genuine, the others accidental (*kata sumbebēkos*). Aristotle then, *An. Post.* 83^a18, excludes accidental predications leaving us with the eight categories of genuine or

Topics (e.g., at 108^b5 it means essence and is equivalent to *ti esti*; at 103^b28 it means substance in contrast to *ti esti*), in that work *ousia* did not have the sense of essence when it was in close proximity to a list of categories where *ti esti* was the first mentioned. That is not the case here in the *Posterior Analytics* where it immediately replaces *ti esti* at 83^a24. But this replacement, of course, obtains when *ousia* takes on the meaning of *ti esti* (i.e., essence) and not vice versa. *Ti esti* is not to be understood as limited to substances. At 97^b15 the entity whose definition is sought is *megalopsuchia*—a non-substance. There is, therefore, no reason to assume as does J. Barnes (*Aristotle's Posterior Analytics* [Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1975], pp. 168–69), that the first category is substance.

simple (*haplōs*) predication which we interpreted as a PR list. If we may rely then on the contrast between accidental predication and accidental being, e.g., “the musical is white,” on the one hand and genuine predication and *per se* being on the other, we may interpret the genuine predication of accidents as cases of *per se* being—forming the categories other than *ti esti*.¹³ The accident color, for example, is *per se* a quality of a substance. Essential predicates, those in *ti esti*, have, of course, also *per se* being. Man, *per se* is the essence of Socrates, color, *per se*, the essence of white. So, as noted above, essence need not be limited to substances and *Metaphysics* 1017^a25 may be read as a PR list of categories as may 1024^b13–14 and 1027^b31 where *ti esti* is the first member with no indication it is to be restricted to the essence of substances, to say nothing of being read as *substance*.

Up to now I have been suggesting that the distinction between the O and PR lists of categories to be found in *Topics* 1.9 may be useful in interpreting other passages in Aristotle.—The only way in which this has differed from standard readings has been in the PR cases where I have maintained that the first category, *ti esti*, even when rendered as *ousia*, is not to be limited to the essence of substances—in other words these are PR and not SRPR lists. We now come to lists of categories which do not fit the O-PR dichotomy I have embraced. It now becomes a question of explaining the divergences and once again my account will differ from commonly received versions.

It is sobering to have to admit that the best known list of categories in the entire Aristotelian corpus, that of *Categories* 4, 1^b26 ff., will not fit neatly into either of the approaches I have taken to be

¹³ Ross, *Meta.* 1: 306–308, denies that *per se* being extends to predication of accidents. I quote (p. 307), “The only propositions in which from the nature of the case subject and predicate must be unambiguously in the same category are those in which the predicate is the genus of the subject. These, then, are the propositions which Aristotle has in view here. Being *per se* is asserted in as many different ways as there are categories.” Ross illustrates these ten ways with examples, such as “man is an animal,” “an animal is a substance,” “white is a color,” “a color is a quality,” and refers us to *Topics* 1.9. There are two serious difficulties for this reading. Ross cannot account for the very examples Aristotle uses and which, given *An. Post.* 1.22, we would, in fact, have expected. He writes (p. 307), “Aristotle makes his meaning unnecessarily obscure by citing (1017^a27–30) propositions which do not assert essential being at all.” Also, all of Ross’s ten examples are in *ti esti*. He takes the first of the ten categories to be *substance*. But, (1) it is not substance, but *ti esti* (essence) and (2) only *it is ti esti*, and there are nine others.

basic. I shall contend, however, that, despite initial appearances, it does not fit the SRPR model either.

The *Categories* list runs, in part, as follows:

substance (*ousia*)—man, horse or “man,” “horse”
 quantity or “how quantified” (*poson*)—“2 cubits long,” “3 cubits long”
 quality or “how qualified” (*poion*)—“white,” “grammatical”

Now one could get the items listed through a SRPR procedure taking Socrates, and Bucephalus, as subjects. Let us see how far such an interpretation will get us with respect to (a) the first category and (b) the secondary categories—especially quality or, not to beg the question, *poion*.

A major complication for the SRPR interpretation is the distinction between primary and secondary substance (2^a11–16) which introduces individuals into the first category and places this category, at least, in the O-list camp. One may object that the secondary substances *might* have been arrived at by the SRPR method and the primary added by an O approach giving us a mixed methodology here. Although I shall have to attribute a complex procedure to Aristotle in the *Categories* I do not believe it obtains quite yet for it appears from the context that he is basing his classifications on grammatical considerations in that he is breaking up statements (*ta kata sumplokēn legomena*—1^a17) into subjects and predicates (*ta kata mēdemian sumplokēn legomena*—1^b25) and these components and/or their ontological correlates become items in the categories. The examples of 1^a18, however, present man and, *pari passu*, horse as subjects, not predicates. There is no reason not to take the first category in a straightforward O manner.

In the case of the other categories there is more to be said for the hypothesis that Aristotle is classifying predicates taken in relation to a (primary) substance as subject. Most, if not all, of the items listed are in the grammatical predicate form.¹⁴ But, though this may be an important part of the story, it cannot account for a great deal of the relevant data to be found in the *Categories*. At 1^a20 ff. we are given

¹⁴ A. Trendelenburg, *Geschichte der Kategorienlehre* (Berlin, 1846), p. 13, gives third person forms for the instances of *poiein* and *paschein* which are the only items presented as infinitives in the Minio-Paluello [Oxford] text.

a four-fold classification of things using the key terms “said of a subject” (*kath’ hypokeimenou legetai*) and “in a subject” (*en hypokeimenō*). This is designed to isolate primary substances in contrast to things in a subject (the entities in the nine non-substance categories) and things said of a subject (species and genera in any category). Individuals, species and genera are contained within each category. The items with which Aristotle is basically concerned (e.g., 1^a20–1^b9) are the substances, primary and secondary, and the non-substances, those “things in a subject,” e.g., a particular piece of grammatical knowledge (*hē tis grammatikē*), grammar, knowledge, color—but not “grammatical” and “colored.” We are clearly in O list territory.

This contention is reinforced by the examples given in the discussions of the non-substance categories. Let me focus on that of quality. At 8^b25 ff. we find four classes of qualities (*poiotētes*). The first is states (including kinds of knowledge, e.g., grammar, and kinds of virtue, e.g., justice) and dispositions (e.g., health). These are things that are “in a subject” and are to be contrasted with substances in the O list manner. But even if we are granted that, in general, Aristotle has to be dealing in the *Categories* with non-substances and not non-essences, a skeptic may well emphasize the fact that both the labels for the non-substance categories given in *Categories* 4 (e.g., *poion*—to be taken as “how qualified”) and the items found therein suggest the classification of grammatical predicates only. It is necessary to challenge this. I shall begin with a consideration of the label *poion* (1^b29). It may well be urged that, strictly speaking, one cannot introduce the *poiotētes* into this category since they are to be distinguished from the *poia*—“just” is in the category, *justice* is not. In reply, one may point out that Aristotle does use the term *poion* to apply to the abstract forms and not only to the grammatical predicates in paronymous form. At 10^b20 we have *justice* and *injustice* as items in *poion*. At *Politics* 1296^b17 freedom, wealth, culture are given under *poion*. Also at *De Anima* 402^a24, clearly an O list, the soul is a candidate for *ousia* or *poion*, etc., so we cannot argue from the label *poion* to the classifying of grammatical predicates and it appears quite in order to loosen this label to cover the qualities in a subject, e.g., justice, grammar, etc.

But one may counter as follows: We grant that Aristotle is unfortunately loose in his terminology but he does mean to contrast the *poiotētes* with the *poia* (8^b25) and the examples he gives under the label *poion* are “just” and “grammatical” and not justice or gram-

mar. If he is really concerned with classifying the qualities in themselves, e.g., justice, why does he not say so directly? Why are they masked in this manner? I suggest that this follows from Aristotle's method of procedure in that he considers the category items as simple units which have meaning *per se* (i.e., are categorematic) as opposed to more complex structures (statements) composed of such units (1^a16–19, 1^b25–2^a10). He merely breaks the statement into its grammatically basic component parts. This would give us the items expressed in the linguistic form they take when predicated. Aristotle has in fact, and not unnaturally, chosen examples where substances are subjects.

But given that he allows for non-substances as subjects, i.e., the subjects that non-substance items are “said of,” as, for example, in “Grammar is knowledge,” given at 1^b2, there is no reason to suppose he meant “man,” “horse” and “ox” (1^a18–19) to be the only type of subjects to be classified, but a chance example has, unfortunately, become the paradigm. Had he dissected statements such as “Justice is (a) virtue” the linguistic forms would have been different from those given and justice, or “justice,” would have been in *poion*. If then, he is not consciously limiting his subjects to substance, but is doing so by accident, there are no grounds for thinking that an SRPR method is an intentional part of Aristotle's strategy even for the categories other than the first.

It may be worth reemphasizing that neither the O approach, which will not account for the grammatical predicates, such as “grammatical,” or the PR approach, subject free or restricted, which will not account for individuals, is sufficient to generate all the items to be included in the categories of this work. So anyone who tries to opt for one systematic procedure is mistaken. What we have, I submit, is a haphazard collection of items. Had Aristotle considered the grammatical components of all the statements he would need to cover the items he recognizes in the *Categories* he would, I suggest, have had to give us both an O and a PR list.

The most complex case, from my perspective, is to be found in *Metaphysics* Z₁. At 1028^a11 after being told that being has several senses (*to on legetai pollachōs*), we read that it signifies (*sēmainei*) on the one hand *ti esti* and *tode ti*, on the other *poion* or *poson*, etc. Now if we were to accept the hint that this refers back to *Metaphysics* Delta 1017^a22–30, where we are given the ten ways of *per se* being, then we would expect to have *ti esti* in the sense of “essence in

general” and the PR list discovered in *Topics* 1.9. But this is not, in fact, what we are given, for the *tode ti* implies *substance* as the first category. At 1028^a14 Aristotle states that *ti esti* signifies *ousia*. This is in contrast to *Topics* 103^b27 where *ti esti* is used to signify sometimes *ousia*, sometimes quantity, etc. If *ti esti* is restricted to *ousia*, how are we to understand *ousia*? If we take it to mean *essence in general*, then we can maintain consistency with earlier passages in Aristotle, but its use in Z_1 , as e.g., at 1028^a24,26, indicates that it is to be read as *substance*.

But, though *ousia* is to be restricted to substance, in one place (1028^a36), *ti esti* has its wider use where it applies to all the categories. This, however, is deviant for Z_1 , for in addition to the limitation to *ousia* at 1028^a14, already mentioned, we have *ousia*, as substance, replaceable by *ti esti* (1034^b13) and *tode ti* (1030^a18, 1030^b13). *Tode ti* may represent primary substance and *ti esti* secondary. In any case *ti esti* is, at 1028^a11, limited to substances.

There are two ways to account for this phenomenon. The usual way (followed by Trendelenburg, Apelt, Maier, Ackrill, Kosman, see pp. 679–81 below) is to consider the passage in question to be SRPR—that is a subject-restricted-to-substance predicate relative approach. This involves taking sentences such as “Socrates is (a) man.” “Socrates is (an) animal,” or “Man is animal” and asking what the predicate tells us about the subject. These predicates tell us what the subject (essentially) is and will be in *ti esti* or essence. But, since these essences will, in fact, be non-primary substances (given that the subjects are all substances), *essence* may be replaced by substance and/or *ti esti* restricted to *ousia* (as substance—See Ackrill, p. 79). The first category of the SRPR approach is limited to substances, i.e., the species, genera and differentia(?) of substances. Remember that this method will not account for individuals and must be complemented by an O procedure.

Now I suggest we start with the O method. This will eliminate the necessity for positing another approach in order to get individuals into the category, for we start with individuals (or species, infima or otherwise) and ask of each subject “*ti esti*; What is it (essentially)?” The answer will be a substance higher along the predicamental line: Socrates → man → animal . . . substance. The issue at this point is not, as with the SRPR alternative, one of explaining how an initial *ti esti* is replaceable by *ousia* but one of explaining how an initial *ousia* is replaceable by *ti esti*. We have an O list with the verbal

modification that general substances, at least, are referred to as *ti esti* rather than *ousia*. In other words, the mere presence of the verbal expression *ti esti* is no longer a mark of an essence list, but obtains in a substance context where the substances which reveal the essence of their inferiors are labelled *ti esti*.

The term *ti esti* could be so used merely because one generates the progression in the predicamental line by asking the question "*ti esti*," and all items, except individuals, could be answers to this question, but this proposal gives no reason as to why such usage is not always followed by Aristotle. I shall offer another possibility which would purport to determine why in *Metaphysics Z*, in contrast to earlier works, e.g., the *Organon*, *Metaphysics Alpha* and *Delta*, we have a change in usage. The theory is that, as opposed to the *Topics* where *ti esti* never signifies substance, by the time of *Metaphysics Z* *ousia* (substance), as first category of the O list, is replaced by *ti esti* because of the development of focal meaning or *pros hen* equivocation (always to be understood in this paper as with respect to "being") since by now *ti esti*, taken *simpliciter*, signifies substance (1030^a21–23).¹⁵

We may support this by considering the *Nichomachean Ethics* for there we find focal meaning and *ti esti* in the sense of substance. At 1096^a19 we read that the term "good" is used in the category of *ti esti* (substance) and quality, etc. At 1096^a24 examples of *ti esti* are the Divine (*ho theos*) and reason (*ho nous*). The *Eudemian Ethics*, however, presents a problem for at 1217^b25 ff. we have *ti esti* as the first category and equivalent to *ousia* (as substance), with the same examples as in the *Nichomachean Ethics*. Now, according to Owen, we do not have focal meaning applied to "good" or "being" in the *Eudemian Ethics* and, on the hypothesis that the *Eudemian Ethics* is early, it constitutes a counter-instance to my thesis.¹⁵ But if it is later than the *Nichomachean Ethics*, then this difficulty is

¹⁵ *E.N.* 1096^b26–29, *Meta.* 1003^a33, 1028^a10–20, are taken as "mature" works where Aristotle has developed a doctrine of a central and primary way of being (something) on which secondary uses depend. This is in contrast to the early version where the ten types of being were merely ambiguous with no central focus (*E.E.* 1217^b25–35). See G. E. L. Owen, "Logic and Metaphysics in some Earlier Works of Aristotle" in *Aristotle and Plato in the mid-Fourth Century* (Goteborg: Almqvist and Wiksell, pp. 167–69).

avoided.¹⁶ This redating of the *Eudemian Ethics* would complicate, but not abolish, the pre-and post-focal meaning division in Aristotle since the *Organon* still remains pre-focal meaning. If, however, my explanation in terms of focal meaning fails, I am still left with the significant result that the cases where *ti esti* is restricted to substance involve individuals as items in the first categories and are therefore most economically regarded from the point of view of the O method—with a slight terminological modification in that a term (*ti esti*), which earlier indicated only essence, now indicates substances with no special emphasis on their being essences and, indeed, in some cases seems to refer to individuals (e.g., *ho theos* at *E.N.* 1096^a24).¹⁷

The defenders of the SRPR procedure have been driven back to the secondary categories of Z_1 but here it would appear they have a chance to make a last stand for these categories seem ideally suited for the SRPR adherents. When (at 1028^a15) we say of what quality (*poion*) something (*ti tode*) is, we say “good” or “bad” and not “three cubits long” or “man.” So it looks as if Aristotle is taking a primary substance, classifying its predicates, and getting grammatical predicates as items in the categories—a result not consistent with the O approach I have endorsed. (Note that this complication does not obtain in the corresponding passages in the *Nichomachean Ethics* and the *Eudemian Ethics* which do not have grammatical predicates in the non-substance categories.) When discussing the first category at *Metaphysics* 1028^a11 I made a claim on behalf of the O approach to the effect that, in contrast with the SRPR, it alone accounts for all

¹⁶ Anthony Kenny, *The Aristotelian Ethics* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1978), concludes (p. 238) that “the historical and philosophical arguments for the comparative lateness of the *N.E.* and the comparative earliness of the *E.E.* are inadequate.” Kenny does not, however, deal directly with the arguments based on the concept of focal meaning. He holds (pp. 217–20) that the *Magna Moralia* cannot be an early work of Aristotle so the list found at 1183^a9 which seems parallel to that of the *E.N.* and the *E.E.* would not be an exception.

¹⁷ My present hypothesis does not *require* that *Metaphysics* Delta 7 and Epsilon 2–4, where PR lists are found, be pre-focal meaning because I am not asserting that Aristotle *had* to restrict *ti esti* to substance after focal meaning, but only that he did not do so before this. I do, however, have to assign *Metaphysics* I and N to the post-focal meaning period. At 1.1054^a15 *ti esti* heads a list of categories and is probably, as Bonitz suggests, to be read as *substance*. In N we find *ti esti* as *substance* at 1089^a34 and at 1089^b36–1090^a1.

category items. This must now be tempered by the admission that one would need a second approach to get all the items in the other categories.

It seems then that we have to grant that, in addition to *Categories* 4, *Metaphysics* 1028^a11 ff. is a mixed bag if we start from the O/PR dichotomy as exhaustive and try to avoid a SRPR account. Assuming Z_1 does not involve non-substance individuals, I opt for an O approach for the first category, and a PR for the rest. The alternative is a SRPR for all categories supplemented by the O for the first-category individual substances. In clear distinction from the other passages examined, I cannot decisively exclude the SRPR as a contributing possibility for Z_1 , but I hope to have shown that it is not necessary to invoke it, for an alternative of roughly equal plausibility may be presented.

I conclude, therefore, that we need more than one account as to how Aristotle arrives at his various lists of categories, but that those which I have called the O, the PR, and the mixed methodologies of the *Categories* and *Metaphysics* Z_1 explain the phenomena. The possibility which does not seem especially helpful, and, indeed only in the case of Z_1 is at all challenging, is the SRPR which has been the clear favorite of the commentators to whose interpretations I now turn.

I shall begin by considering those who tried to elucidate Aristotle's doctrine in terms of one method of arriving at the categories.

If, on the one hand, one regards the categories as classifying objects (individuals, species, and genera) as to their basic ontological type (the O approach) there is no trouble with individuals, including individual substances, but one will not be able to have a category of essence, or *ti esti*, which ranges over more than substances (as we have at *Topics* 103^b22, 26 and *Metaphysics* 996^b17–18).

This is the position of H. Bonitz, *Ueber die Kategorien des Aristoteles* (Vienna: Hof-und Staatsdruckerei, 1853), for he says (p. 37), "Die Kategorien geben im Sinne des Aristoteles die verschiedenen Bedeutungen an, in welchen wir den Begriff des Seienden aussprechen; sie bezeichnen die obersten Geschlechter, deren einem jedes Seiende sich muss unterordnen lassen. Sie dienen daher zur Orientierung im Gebiete des durch Erfahrung Gegebene." When he discusses *Topics* 103^b22, where we have a *ti esti* which cannot be restricted to substance, he acknowledges (p. 9), that every proposition must state the definition, genus, property or accident of something. But then he takes the list of ten categories at 103^b22 not as being the

ultimate classifications of predicates as related to a subject, i.e., essential plus nine classes of accidental, but as being the ultimate classes of objects which can serve as subjects of predication (p. 10). This, however, is the list given at 103^b28, where *ousia*, or substance, is the first member, which is classifying entities *per se* as to their ultimate nature. It is only by overlooking the paradigm instance of what I have given as the PR way of arriving at a list of categories (the *ti esti*, or essence, list) that Bonitz is able to see only the O way and conclude (p. 13), “Aus der Stelle der Topik, von welcher wir in dieser Eroerterung ausgiengen, ersahen wir, dass durch die zehn Kategorien das gesammte Bereich, sei es nun des Gedachten, sei es des Seienden, nach der Verschiedenheit seines Inhaltes in zehn Gebiete dergestalt getheilt werden sollte, dass jeder Gegenstand unserer Vorstellung oder Erfahrung einem derselben angehoren muesste.”

If, on the other hand, one recognizes only the PR approach, that of classifying the ways in which a predicate is related to a subject, as *the* paradigm, the first category is essence and one has to invent a locus for substance. One may devise a first step in such a program by ignoring the fact that *ti esti* may range over non-substance categories, as is clear from *Topics* 103^b27–37, and so restrict *ti esti* to the essence of substances (the SRPR). But there still remains the decisive difficulty that one cannot account for the primary cases of substances, the individuals. These cannot be subsumed under the label *ti esti* which, from this point of view, includes only essential predicates.

A classic example of this case is found in A. Trendelenburg, *Geschichte der Kategorienlehre* (Berlin: G. Bethge, 1846). He maintains that the origin of the categories lies in the phenomenon of grammatical predication and that the items in the categories are predicates (pp. 13, 23, and 162, where he says, “Die Kategorien [meaning the items in the categories] sind abgeloste Praedicate.”). When faced with the individual substances, he tries to transform these into predicates. He remarks (p. 48), “Auf die Frage, was ist das Vorliegende, tritt in der Antwort auch das Individuum ins Praedicat, und insofern kann *ti esti* auch fuer die Frage nach der ersten Substanz gelten.” He then gives *Topics* 103^b29 where, given a man, one says it is a man or animal and *ti esti legei kai ousian semainei*. But what one says when one says *ti esti* and, hence, falls into the category of *ti esti*, is *man* or *animal* and *not* the primary substance. When I say *ti esti Sokrates*; “Socrates” is not a predicate. Trendelenburg continues,

“Ebenso kann auf die Frage *ti esti to ekkeimenon*; geantwortet werden *esti Kallias*.” But is “Callias” a predicate? Trendelenburg refers us to *An. Pr.* 43^a35 where, ironically, the point being made is that such items as “Cleon” and “Callias” cannot be true predicates, but may be predicated *kata sumbebēkos*. However, as Aristotle is at great pains to point out, *ta schēmata tēs katēgorias* are associated with what is said *kath’ hautō* and not *kata sumbebēkos* (*Meta.* 1017^a7, 22). If anything is clear in Aristotle it is that individual substances are not predicates, unless one makes a desperate appeal to the baffling passage at *Metaphysics* 1029^a23 where substance is said to be predicated of matter—and this Trendelenburg does not do.

Trendelenburg follows the SRPR line. When faced with the difficulty that, at *Topics* 1.9, *ti esti* is wider than substance, he remarks (p. 47), “trotz dieser Erweiterung heisst die erste Kategorie *to ti esti* [=ousia or substance] denn die Erweiterung ist nur secundaer!”

O. Apelt (*Die Kategorienlehre des Aristoteles in Beiträgen zur Geschichte der Griechischen Philosophie* [Leipzig: Teubner, 1891]), also chooses the SRPR alternative. He believes (p. 124) that Aristotle gets the categories “durch die Beziehung, in die sie als Praedikate zu einem wirklichen Gegenstand der Anschauung, zu einem *tode ti* als Subjekt gesetzt werden.” He avoids the PR alternative by taking *ti esti* (p. 143) as limited to the essences of substances, not acknowledging the fact that at *Topics* 103^b27 it ranges over the O list of categories.

Apelt accounts for individuals in the first category by arguing (pp. 143–44) that Aristotle cannot decide whether the essential nature of something (die Wesenhaftigkeit) is in the individual or the species and as a result there is an interlinkage (Ineinandergreifen) of *tode ti* and *ti esti* as is shown by the use of the term *ousia* (substance) to cover both. So individuals get into the first category (*ti esti*) because of a metaphysical confusion which precludes their being adequately distinguishable from predicates.

I now turn to those who allow for two procedures to account for the complexities of Aristotle’s doctrine of the categories. I can be briefer here since, in contrast with the scholars already treated, there is no need to indicate how they try to cover all the data by one explanatory principle.

H. Maier, *Die Syllogistik des Aristoteles, Zweiter Teil, Zweite Hälfte* (Tübingen: H. Laupp’sche Buchhandlung, 1900), maintains (p. 321) that the PR approach of *Topics* 1.9 is a development from

that of the *Categories* which he interprets in an O fashion. But he also holds (pp. 322–23) that *An. Post* 83^a21, *Meta.* 996^b17–18 and 1017^a25 are SRPR and not, as I have taken them to be, straightforward PR lists.

Ackrill, pp. 78–79, outlines the O and SRPR methods. A. Kosman, “Aristotle’s First Predicament,” *Review of Metaphysics* (March 1967): 483–506, comes closest to my interpretation but, under the influence of *Metaphysics Z*, attempts to reduce even *Topics* 1.9 to an SRPR list.¹⁸

All the commentators mentioned, except Bonitz, accept the SRPR list which, on the view I am proposing, plays no role in Aristotle’s thought except as a possible alternative way of taking Z_1 . My strategy removes the stigma of confusion from *Topics* 1.9 but, I regret, at the cost of transferring it to *Categories* 4 and *Metaphysics Z*₁.

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¹⁸ Kosman distinguishes (p. 483) between the categories as a list classifying types of predicates (my PR list) and a list of predicates classifying types of entities (my O list). The first obtains, for him, when one asks different questions about the same entity. The second results when the same question, i.e., “*ti esti*,” is asked about different entities. He then (p. 484) reads *Cat.* 4 as an O list and *Topics* 1.9 as a PR list and further (p. 485), and to my mind most commendably, takes the first category label as a clue to the nature of the list. *Ti esti* signals the list of types of predicates, *ousia* the list of ultimate types of things.

But he is ultimately prevented from considering the O list and the PR list, which he takes pains to differentiate, as equally valid alternative lists and sees them as versions of the same list. A major reason for this is his contention (p. 485) that the one list (the PR) classifies what we say, the other (the O) what is. Kosman believes that this is not a viable distinction for the interpretation of Aristotle and, therefore, a two-list approach is misleading. But the PR list does not just classify “what we say” for the predicates so classified need not be taken only as linguistic entities.

Although Kosman acknowledges that Aristotle gives us the PR list in *Topics* 1.9, he insists (p. 489) on correcting him (to a SRPR position). He is motivated by the knowledge that “Aristotle’s mature view is that there is a special and privileged relation between *ousia* [substance] and *ti esti* predication” and the *Topics* account, which allows *ti esti* to range equally over all categories, is “too egalitarian.”